

Message Text

SECRET

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43

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 /026 W

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R 210700Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2210

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY PARIS

CINCPAC

COMUSSAG

S E C R E T PHNOM PENH 7407

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CB

SUBJECT: WHITE PAPER ON NORTH VIETNAMESE VIOLATIONS

REF: STATE 143070 (NOTAL

1. WHITE PAPER IS INACCURATE AND IS REPRESENTATIVE OF CONTINUING GKR EFFORT TO OVERSTATE VC/NVA INVOLVEMENT IN CAMBODIA TO GAIN INTERNATIONAL SYMPATHY.

2. THERE ARE NO VC/NVA DIVISIONS PARTICIPATING IN THE CURRENT OFFENSIVE AROUND PHNOM PENH. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT INSURGENT FORCES ARE RECEIVING LIMITED COMBAT SUPPORT FROM ELEMENTS OF THE NVA 367TH SAPPER GROUP IN THE PHNOM PENH AREA; HOWEVER, THIS IS NOT CONFIRMED. ALL EVIDENCE POINTS TO THE FACT THAT INSURGENTS HAVE TAKEN OVER THE BRUNT OF ALL MAJOR COMBAT ACTIVITY IN CAMBODIA, INCLUDING THE OFFENSIVE AROUND PHNOM PENH. THE VC/NVA ARE PROVIDING PRINCIPALLY ADVISORY AND LOGISTICAL SUPPORT. THEY MAY ALSO HAVE A LIMITED COMBAT ROLE, TO INCLUDE FIRE SUPPORT.

3. WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE THAT THE VC/NVA HAVE INCREASED

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THEIR FORCES IN CAMBODIA. TO THE CONTRARY, INTELLIGENCE

INDICATES THAT THEIR STRENGTH IS DECREASING AS MAJOR ELEMENTS OF THE COSVN ADMINISTRATIVE AND REAR SERVICE APPARATUS RELOCATE TO SOUTH VIETNAM. WE ESTIMATE THAT THIS HAS ALREADY INVOLVED SOME 10-12,000 VC/NVA PERSONNEL. OUR CURRENT BASELINE ESTIMATE OF VC/NVA FORCES IN CAMBODIA IS 30,000 PERSONNEL, AS COMPARED TO APPROXIMATELY 42,000 IN DEC 72. OF THE CURRENT TOTAL, THERE ARE AN ESTIMATED 8,500 COMBAT PERSONNEL AND 21,500 ADMINISTRATIVE AND REAR SERVICE PERSONNEL. THE NUMBER OF COMBAT FORCES IN CAMBODIA HAS REMAINED FAIRLY STATIC SINCE JAN 73. THE BULK OF THESE FORCES ARE LOCATED NEAR THE RVN BORDER AND ARE TARGETED AGAINST VIETNAM. WE CONSIDER THAT ONLY 3100 VC/NVA COMBAT FORCES ARE POTENTIALLY TARGETED AGAINST THE GKR; HOWEVER, TO OUR KNOWLEDGE NONE OF THESE FORCES HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN COMBAT ACTIVITY SINCE THE 28 JAN CEASEFIRE.

4. FANK J2 HAS JUST PREPARED AN INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE IN WHICH THEY CONCLUDE THAT THERE MAY BE AS MANY AS 41,000 VC/NVA FORCES IN CAMBODIA BUT THAT A MORE PRACTICAL ESTIMATE IS 33-38,000. THIS ESTIMATE IS SOMEWHAT INFLATED BUT REPRESENTS WHAT THEY BELIEVE TO BE THE ACTUAL VC/NVA PRESENCE VICE THE INFLATED FIGURES RELEASED IN THE WHITE PAPER.

5. ALL THE FIGURES IN PARAS 3 AND 4 ARE CLASSIFIED.

6. SINCE IT IS HARDLY IN OUR INTEREST TO ENTER INTO A PUBLIC DEBATE WITH THE GKR, WE RECOMMEND THAT OUR COMMENTS IN REPLY TO INQUIRIES BE CONFINED TO THE LOW-KEY STATEMENT THAT WE REGARD THE GKR FIGURES AS EXAGGERATED AND WOULD PLACE THE NUMBER OF NVA/VC FORCES NOW IN CAMBODIA, OF ALL TYPES, AT NEARER 30,000.
SWANK

NOTE: EXDIS ADDED PER SS/O MR. NEWLIN)

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NNN

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